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This Week in Congress

April 19, 2010

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." This Week's headlines are:

- [Tax Reform and Relief Needed Now](#)
- ['Business as Usual' Continues in Washington, D.C.](#)
- [Remembering the Victims of the Holocaust](#)
- [Emporia State University Breaks Ground on Memorial Union Expansion](#)
- [Congratulating Kansas Students in 2010 Congressional Arts Competition](#)
- [Visiting with Kansas City Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Joining Kansas Mennonites at Annual Relief Sale in Hutchinson](#)
- [Kansans Celebrate 150th Anniversary of Pony Express](#)
- [Mourning the Loss of Judy Sherrer](#)
- [In the Office](#)

Tax Reform and Relief Needed Now

Kansans work three full months to fulfill their yearly tax obligation. It is wrong to ask a family to forfeit at least a quarter of its yearly income to fund a government that cannot control spending. In Kansas and across the country, Americans have made it clear that they need tax reform and relief now. Congress needs to listen to this message and reduce the tax burden and simplify the tax code. This week, as Americans sent the government their hard-earned money, I shared the message of frustrated Kansans with the White House and my colleagues in Congress.

- **Speaking about Tax Reform and Relief:** On Wednesday, I spoke to the House of Representatives about the need to reduce taxes and reform the tax code. The IRS has estimated that Americans spend \$7.6 billion per year filing their taxes. Congress should listen to the people they represent and take action to reform our broken tax structure.

[Click here](#)
to view my remarks.

- **Opposing the White House's Proposed Value-Added Tax:** White House senior economic adviser Paul Volcker recently suggested the U.S. adopt a value-added tax, or VAT, similar to those charged in Europe.

A value-added tax would be an additional tax added by retailers on goods and services and would be paid equally by individuals at all income levels. As a member of the Anti-VAT Caucus, I see the dangers of this tax. It would harm both businesses and consumers, eliminate jobs and stunt economic growth. I joined more than a dozen of my colleagues this week in calling on the White House to abandon this bad idea.

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to read more about this issue.

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- **Requesting Hearings on Tax Reform Legislation:** Several pieces of legislation have been introduced that would reduce the burden of filing taxes. One such proposal is H.R. 25, The Fair Tax Act, which would eliminate many of the bureaucratic costs associated with our current tax system. I have called on the newly appointed Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Sander Levin, to schedule hearings on this legislation to start a discussion of how Congress can help taxpayers. The time has come for Congress to act.

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‘Business as Usual’ Continues in Washington, D.C.

In communities across our state, Kansans took part in rallies this week to protest business as usual in Washington, D.C. Yet on Tax Day, April 15, Congress ignored this message by continuing its spending spree and passing a shortsighted bill that will increase the national deficit by \$18 billion. Like much government spending this year, this bill will be paid for by future generations. Not only does the legislation increase the deficit, but it also fails to provide a permanent solution to a Medicare reimbursement problem affecting Kansas hospitals and doctors. Kansas medical professionals need a permanent solution so that they can have stability in their practices. Finally, despite its intention, the legislation does little to address our country's persistently high unemployment rate. Rather than continuing to spend money we do not have, Congress needs to pursue real solutions to our nation's problems. [Click here](#) to view my remarks to the House of Representatives.

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Remembering the Victims of the Holocaust

Sixty-five years ago, the world saw with horror the atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps when Holocaust survivors were liberated by Allied soldiers. Kansan and commander of the allied forces in Europe, General Dwight D. Eisenhower instructed his staff that every American

unit not on the front lines should see the concentration camps so that these soldiers would know what they were fighting against. General Eisenhower understood the importance of documenting and remembering this tragic event so that nothing like it would ever happen again.

On Thursday, I joined Members of Congress, White House officials, Holocaust survivors, veterans and other guests in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust during the National Days of Remembrance ceremony. This observance was established by Congress as America's national commemoration of the Holocaust and occurs each spring after Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom Hashoah) in Israel. I was reminded during this year's ceremony that current governments seek to destroy entire nations. The best way to honor the victims of the Holocaust is by making sure that type of genocidal violence never occurs again.

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Emporia State University Breaks Ground on Memorial Union Expansion

On Friday, I attended a luncheon in celebration of an expansion and renovation project taking

placing at Emporia State University's (ESU) Memorial Union. Following the luncheon, I participated in the groundbreaking ceremony of the \$18.5 million project, which will enhance services and recreational opportunities available to ESU students. The university's investment is positive for ESU, Emporia and our state.

I commend the student body and student government leaders, particularly past President, Angela Blaufuss and current President, Jonathan Krueger, for leading the effort to invest in future students. I also commend Ret. Brig. General Art Bloomer, immediate past Chairman of the ESU Foundation Board of Trustees and his wife Sue, for their ongoing support and commitment to ESU students. Their generous contribution to the Memorial Union renovation project, specifically the "Bloomer Veterans Hall of Honor," will enhance and preserve ESU's tribute to our nation's veterans. Thanks to President Michael Lane, and members of the Kansas Board of Regents for their hospitality. [Click here](#) to view a photo from the ceremony.



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